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REBECCA DAVIS DANCE COMPANY PRESENTS
1994 IN PHILADELPHIA
Stories of Rwandan Survivors
A World Premiere for Local Youth

PHILADELPHIA, PA: A few months ago, Philadelphia choreographer and entrepreneur Rebecca Davis left her Broad Street studio for a month in a hostel in Kigali, Rwanda, where she began development of a special outreach program: **1994 in Philadelphia**, coming November 17th to Rittenhouse Square's City Institute Library and December 4th to the Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice.

Shortly before her summer trip, Rebecca Davis premiered *DARFUR*, launched in April on the Arden Theater's stage. Standing ovations from the deeply affected audience affirmed the importance of the show's topic, and Rebecca felt there was more to do to raise awareness for the modern-day genocides that rarely reach our newspapers. Recipient of a Leeway Art and Change Grant, she already had her sights set on a new ballet inspired by stories from survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, in which at least 800,000 of Rwanda's Tutsi citizens were killed while the international community failed to act, blind to the reality of the genocide.

With the help of her grant, Ms. Davis resolved to bridge the gap between her Philadelphia studio and the people whose stories she wanted to tell. "Artistically and as a choreographer, it's important for me to connect firsthand to the painful and rewarding human emotions that come through in my work," she explains. The painful evidence of the violence that overtook Kigali in the spring of 1994 punctuated her travels, but she was also deeply affected by the powerful optimism and hospitality of Rwanda's youth, many of whom live in communal houses without a guardian, having lost their parents to the genocide. Now, she looks forward to bringing their stories to an American audience.

Ms. Davis is bringing the true stories of Rwanda's young survivors to our awareness in a way the world has never seen: through the unique and powerful narrative of her contemporary choreography. Her trip to Rwanda comes full circle with **1994 in Philadelphia**, a brand-new dance piece developed especially to be performed by a cast of Philadelphia's top young dancers. The performers include Brianna and Cassidy Giordano of Havertown, Kim Conicelli of Bensalem and Xavier Townsend of Media, as well as longtime Company student Kiera Connors, who also appeared in 2007's "Helen Keller" at the Prince Music Theatre.

Rebecca Davis Dance Company presents these special outreach performances with the help of two city venues. On Monday, November 17th, **1994 in Philadelphia** arrives at the Philadelphia City Institute Library in Rittenhouse Square at 6:00 pm. The show will also be performed Thursday, December 4th at 6:00pm at Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice. This performance is recommended for ages twelve and above, and each show will be accompanied by a discussion of the performance's challenges, inspiration and artistic process.

JUST THE FACTS

WHO: The Rebecca Davis Dance Company

WHAT: *1994 in Philadelphia*, a dance performance based on stories from survivors of the Rwandan genocide.

WHERE: Philadelphia City Institute Library
1905 Locust Street (19th and Locust on W. Rittenhouse Square)

Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice
7500 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia

WHEN: Monday, November 17th at 6:00pm at the Library.

Thursday, December 4th at 6:00pm at Parkway Northwest High School.

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